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COMICS



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COMICS
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EXCALIBUR™



FLASHBACK!

50 YEARS
OF CAPTAIN AMERICA
1941 - 1991

THE POWERFUL CAPTAIN BRITAIN, THE SHAPE-CHANGING MEGGAN, THE INTANGIBLE SHADOWCAT, THE SWASHBUCKLING NIGHTCRAWLER, THE MYSTERIOUS PHOENIX, THE EVER-UNPREDICTABLE WIDGET AND LOCKHEED THE DRAGON FORGED IN THE FIRES OF THEIR TRAGIC PASTS. THEY HAVE BANDED TOGETHER TO FIGHT A MODERN DAY CRUSADE AGAINST THE FORCES OF EVIL! STAN LEE PRESENTS...

EXCALIBUR

HEARTBREAKER

LOBDELL/ROSS/MILGRAM/OLIVER/LOPEZ/KANAGH/DEFALCO

EXCALIBUR
CREATED BY
CLAREMONT
AND
DAVIS

SHE HAD IT ALL PLANNED.

SOMEDAY WHEN PRINCESS PI
DIDN'T WANT TO BE PRINCESS
ANYMORE, AMY WOULD BE
THE NEW ONE.

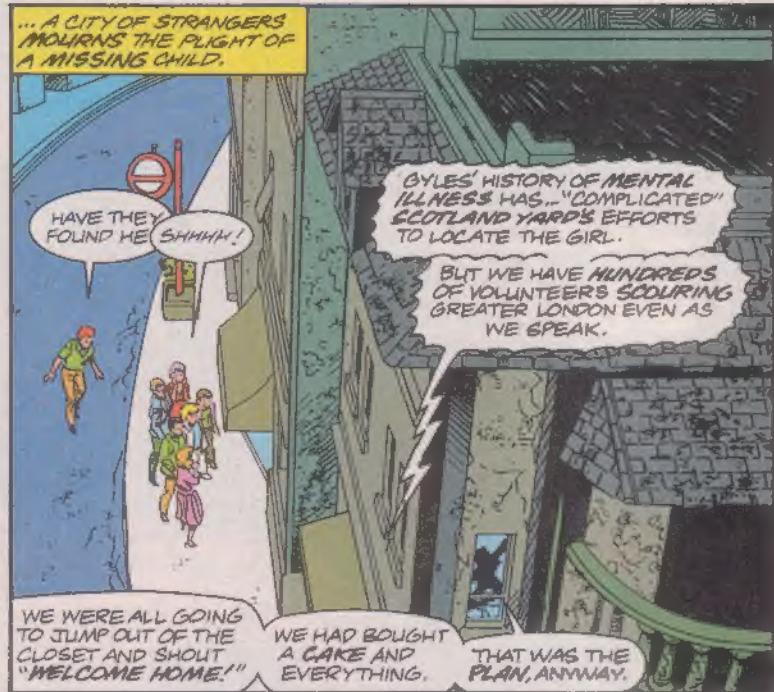
AT SIX YEARS OLD, HER
POLITICAL AGENDA CONSISTED OF
MAKING BROCCOLI AGAINST
THE LAW.

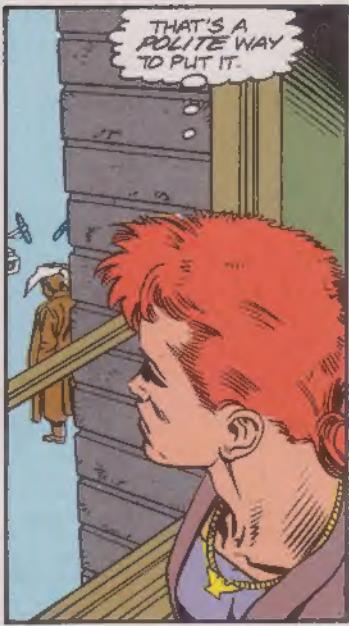
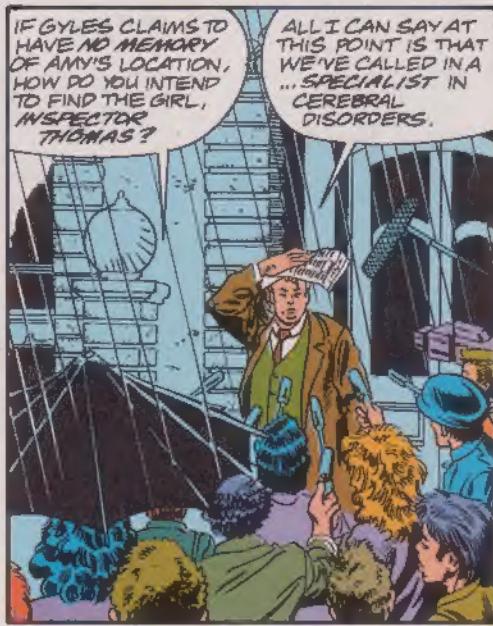
OH, AND EVERYONE
WOULD HAVE A CAT.

THAT WAS THREE DAYS AGO.

LIFE HAS A WAY OF CHANGING
ONE'S PRIORITIES... EVEN AT
SIX YEARS OLD.

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I'M IN. NOW LET'S SEE WHAT WE CAN SEE.

GYLES
GETTING
READY
FOR A
"DATE!"



OUTSIDE
THE
SCHOOLYARD.
ANY IN SIGHT.

STR--
STRUGGLE.

SOME
KIND OF...

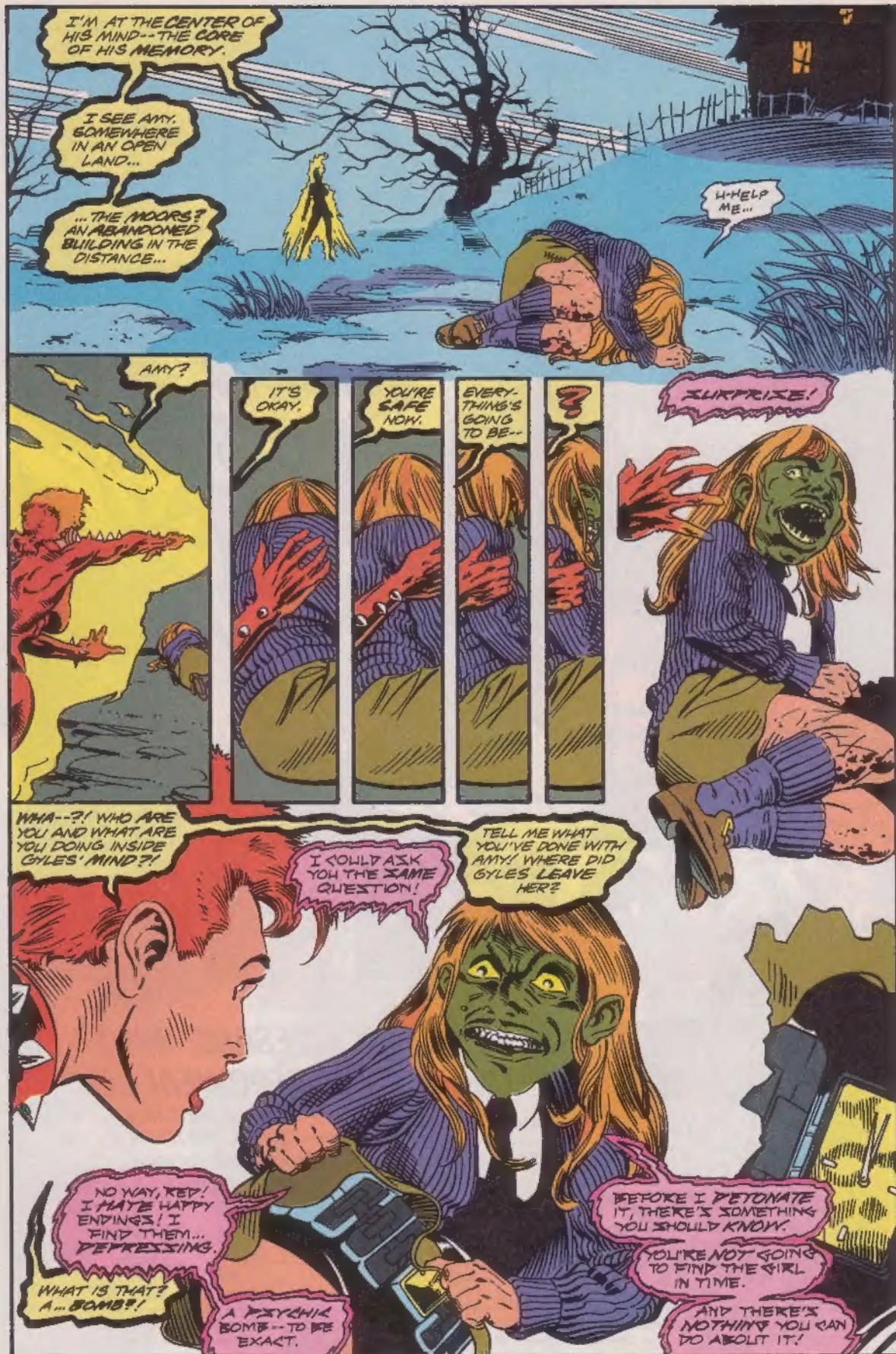
...INTERFERENCE?

TAKING HER--
SOMewhere?

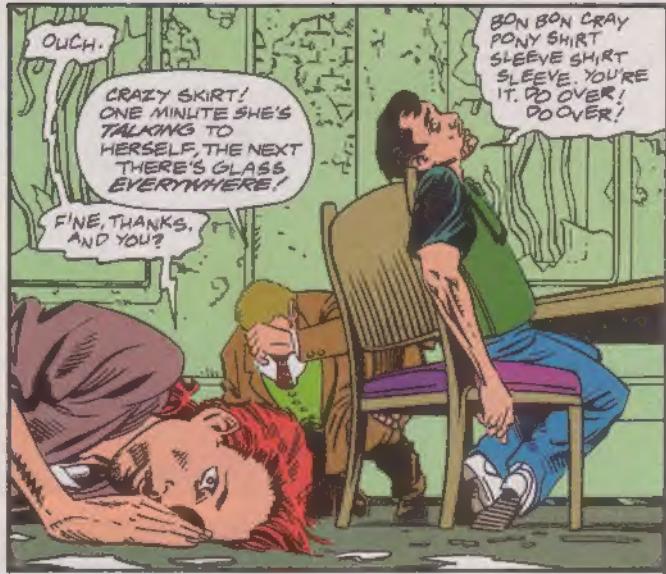
THINGS ARE
GETTING VERY...
VAGUE.

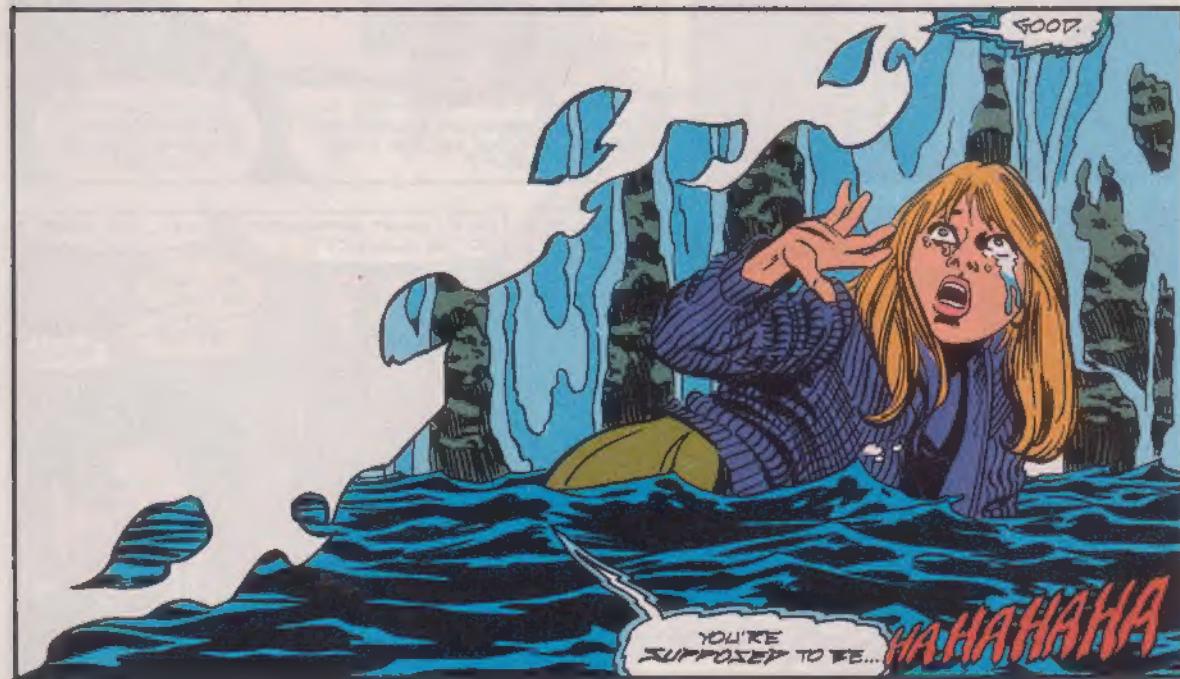
SOME THING...SOME
OUTSIDE FORCE IS
IN HERE WITH US.

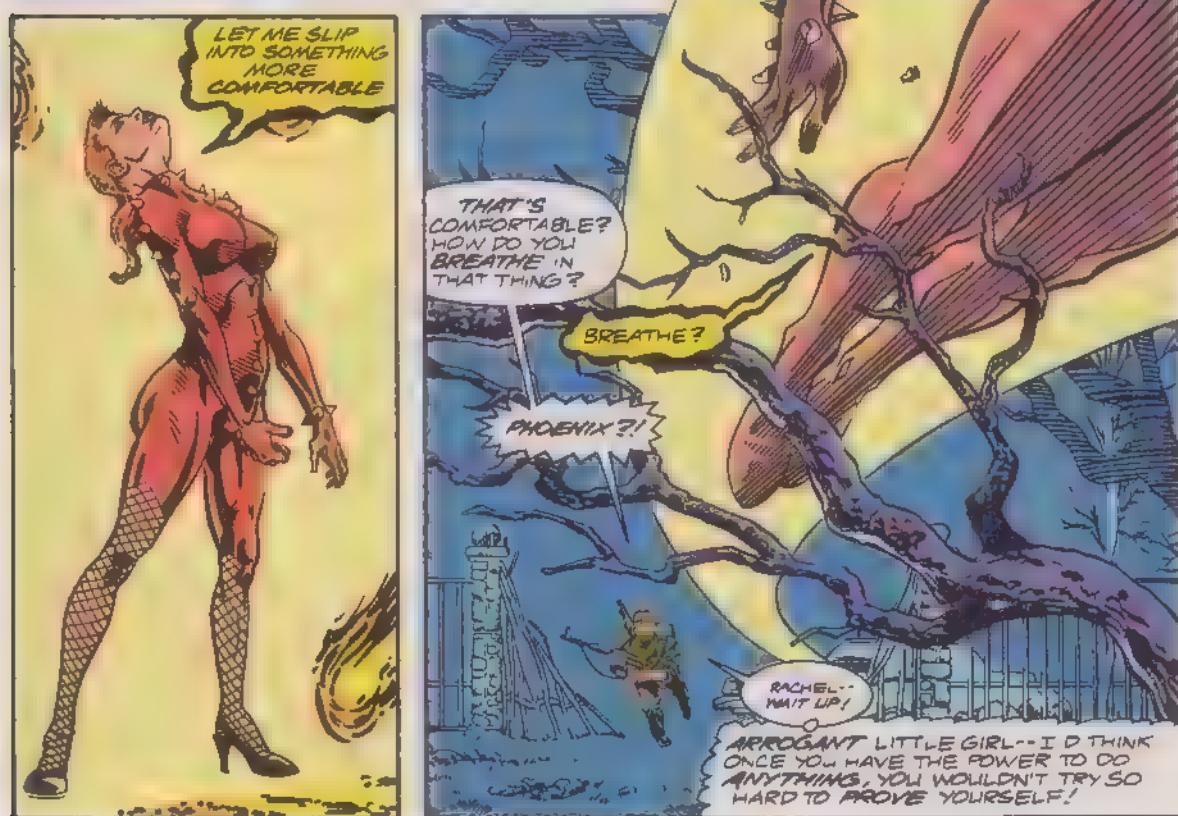
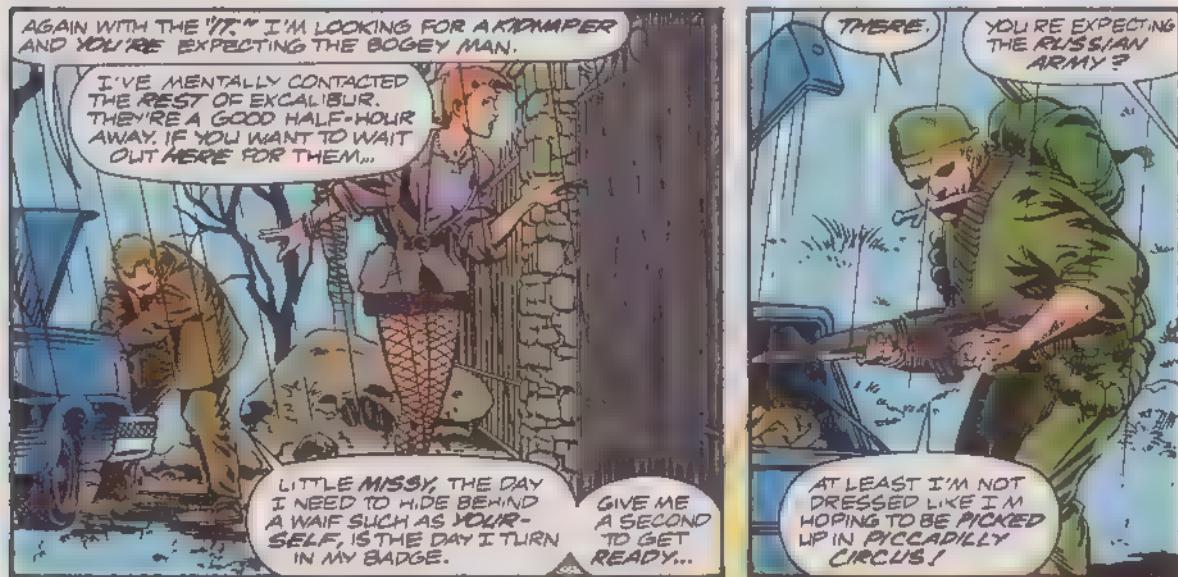


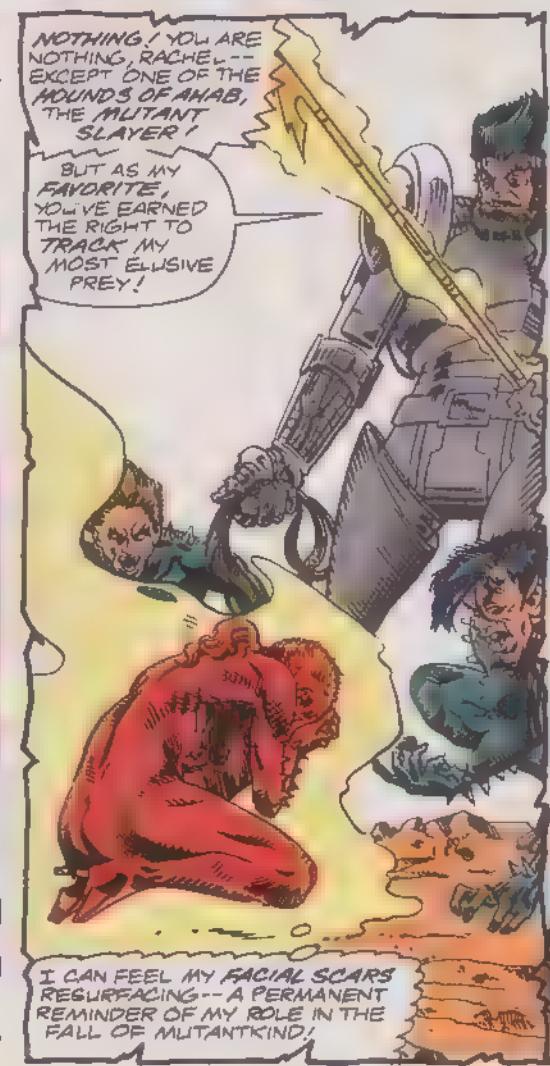


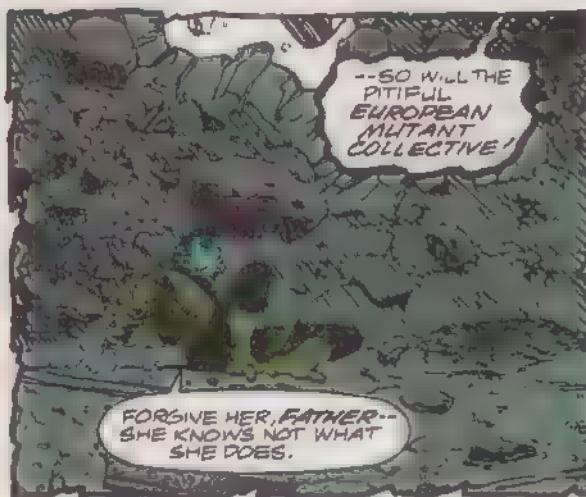
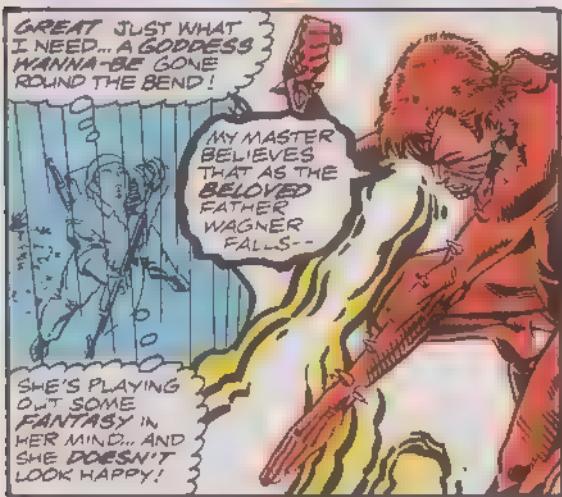
IT IS AN EXPLOSION WITHOUT SOUND.













"DEFEATED?!"
WHAT A SPLENDIDLY
HUMAN CONCEPT!



I GUESS I OWE
SUMMERS AN
APOLOGY. TURNS OUT
IT WAS THE BOOEY
MAN ALL ALONG!

ON THE CONTRARY--THE
BOOEY MAN IS A CREATURE
OF FANTASY. UNLIKE THE
ILLUSIONS I PLACED IN
YOUNG RACHEL'S MIND,
I AM QUITE REAL!

I AM...
DISPAWRED!

AND I'M HOPE
AND SHE'S CROSBY.
WHERE'S THE
GIRL?!

I WOULD CONCENTRATE
ON DEFEATING ME IF I
WERE YOU--

--EVEN IF IT IS
IMPOSSIBLE!

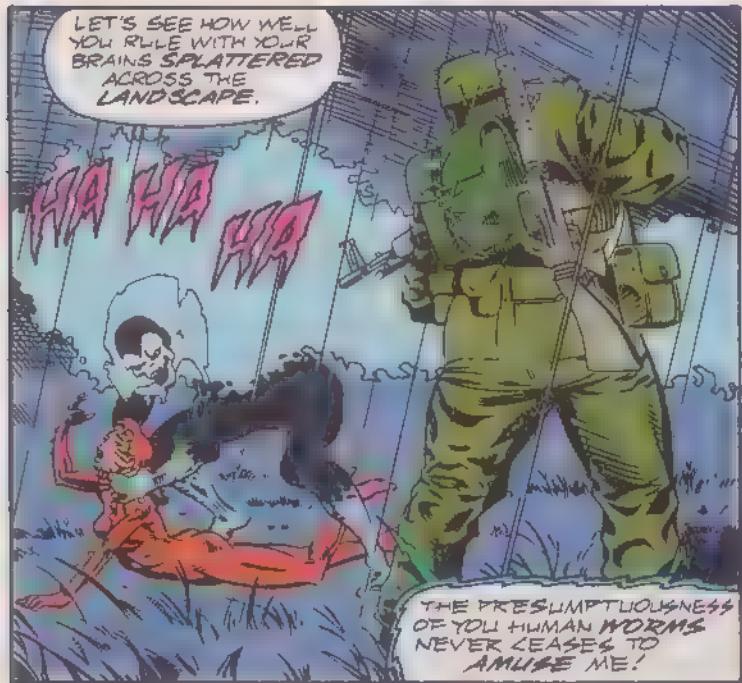
YOU SEE, I ENGINEERED
THE YOUNG GIRL'S DILEMMA
SO THAT I COULD SIPHON
OFF THE DESPAIR AND
HOPELESSNESS OF THE
MASSES.



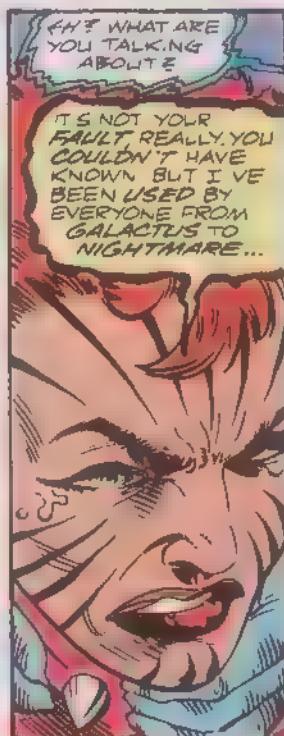
...AND I HAVE ENOUGH
COSMIC ANGST ON HAND
TO EXPAND MY REIGN
OF TERROR OVER YET
ANOTHER DIMENSION!

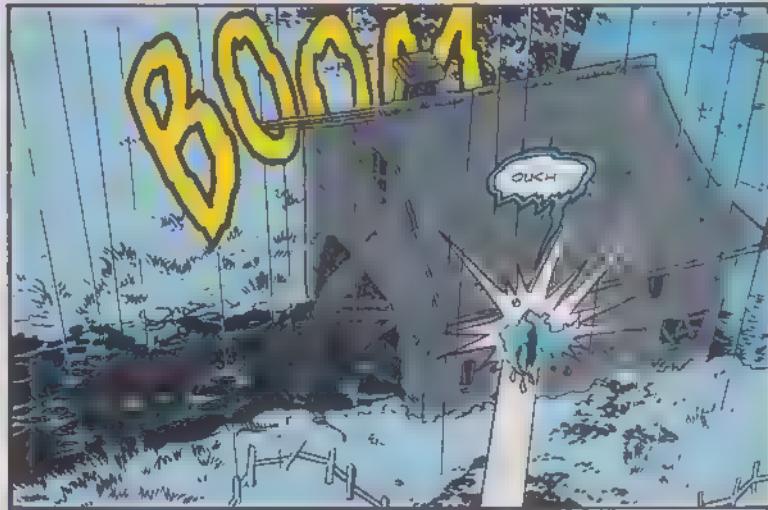
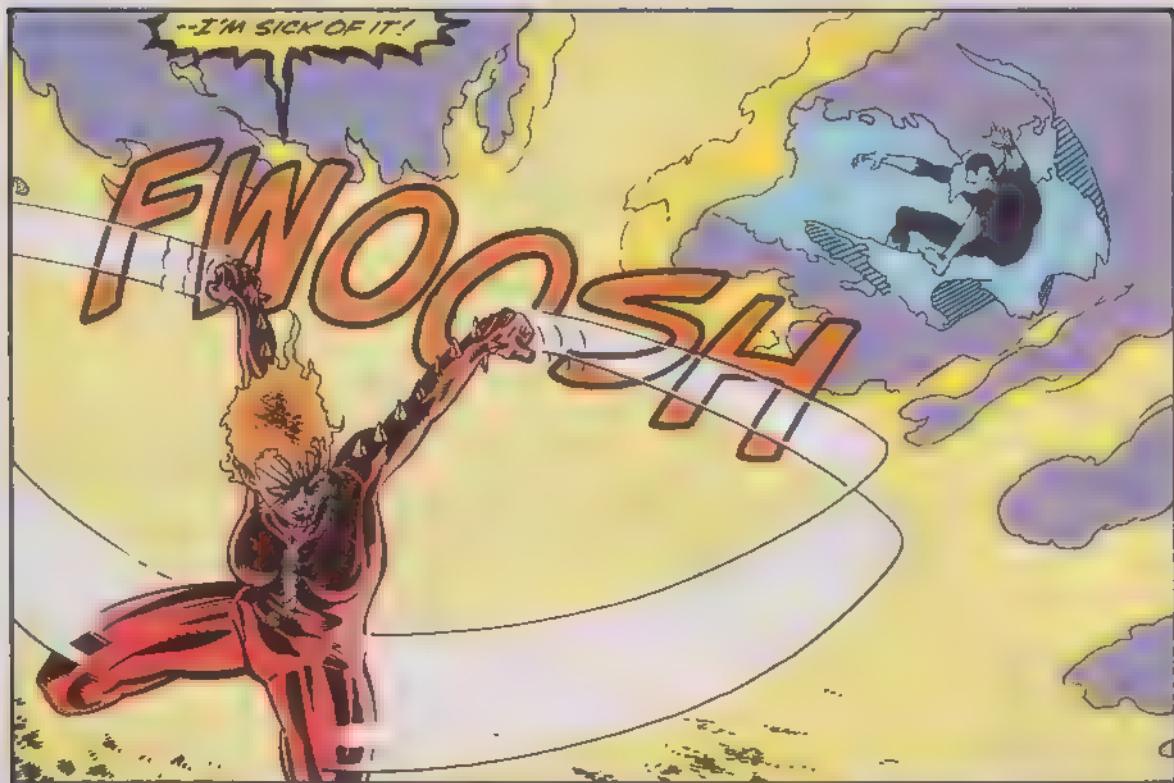
THEN WHO
SHOULD DROP
INTO MY LAP BUT
THE PHOENIX?

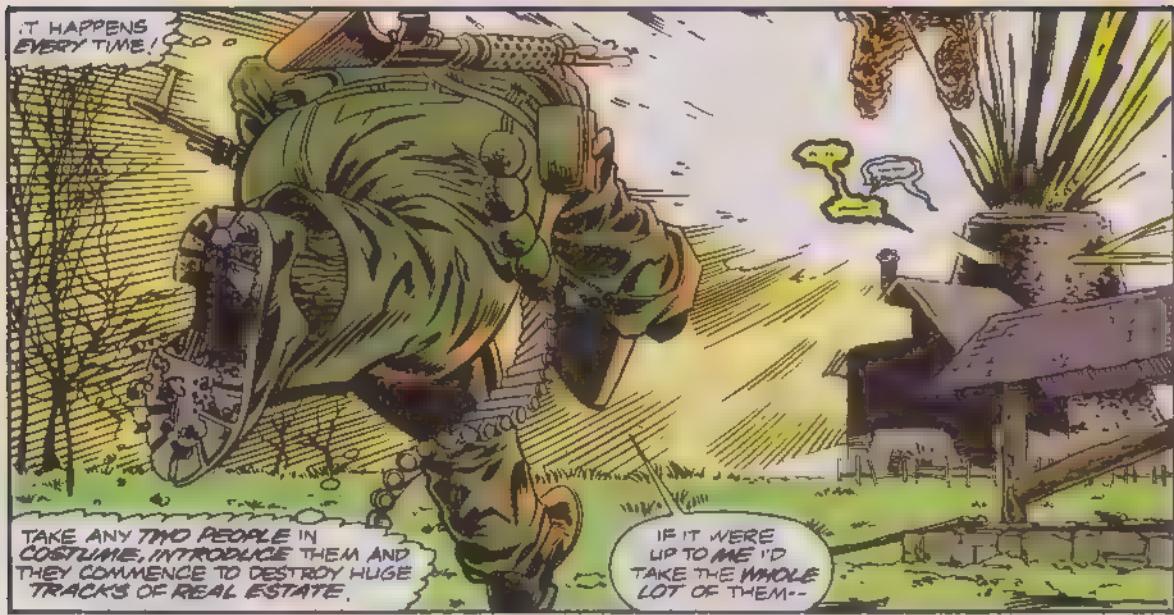
ALL I HAD TO
DO WAS TRIG-
GER MEMORIES
OF RACHEL'S
SORDID PAST...

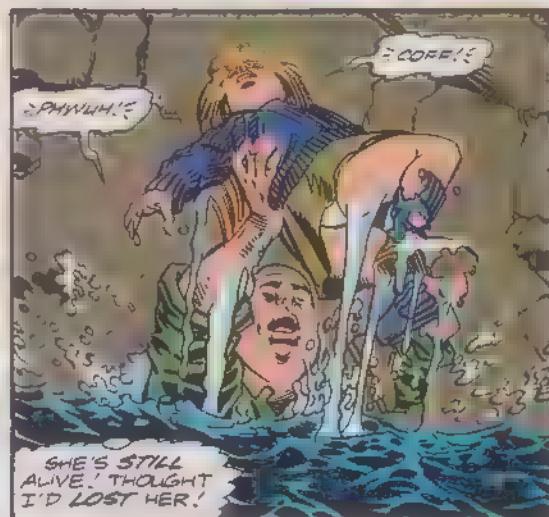
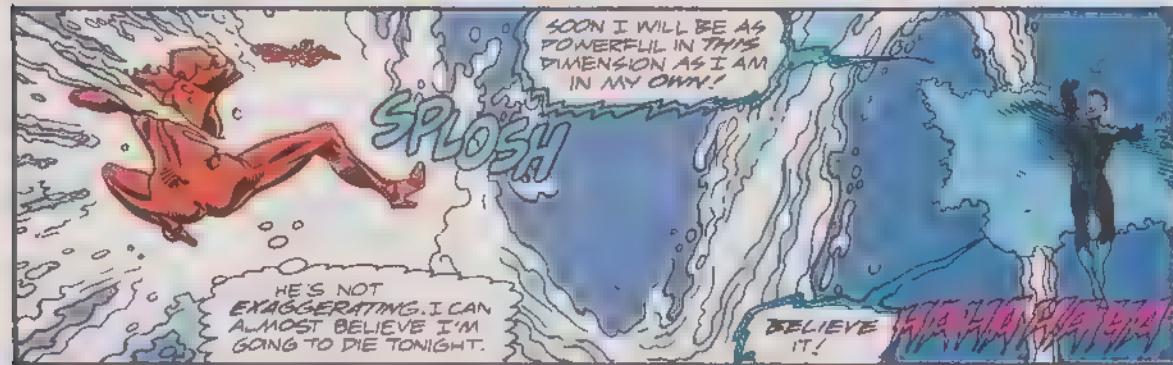


* MARVEL TEAM-UP #68--TK









BULLPEN BULLETINS

STAN'S SOAPBOX

Hi, Heroes! Even though Christmas is behind us, big-hearted Marvel still has plenty of goodies in store for you! And here's where your old faithful Soapbox Santa clues you in to two new titles going on sale right now!

You've seen the ads! You've heard the name uttered in whispers! But now it's time to meet the newest, most exotically exciting superstar in the mighty Marvel firmament—the only super hero based on a real-life, flesh-and-blood human being—dazzling, dangerous, deadly—a smoldering sizzlin' stick of human dynamite—the one and only NIGHT CAT!

Of course, the cat's manager, Dapper Don Kessler, and I have a somewhat selfish motive for pushing Night Cat's first issue since sneaky artist Denys Cowan actually drew us in as part of the story. Yours truly wrote the script, too, which could possibly change the complexion of the comic book industry for all time to

come! But don't let that discourage you—you can always just look at the pictures!

But hey, that's only half the excitement! Our who's blushing? Bullpen is turned on to



Troma Firms' wild and wacky world-famous movie idol, TOXIC AVENGER, the super hero who makes Spider-Man seem like a we-l-adjusted average guy! In fact, we dig it so much that we made a deal w/ the lovable Lyndy Kaufman and the magnanimous Michael Herz, The big-time movie producers who so unselfishly unleashed ol' Toxie on a defenseless public, a deal to publish his sensationaly screwy adventures in our maniacal style!

Be forewarned! Toxie is not your usual hero! In fact, he's not your usual anything. But this you can count on—NIGHT CAT and THE TOXIC AVENGER may turn out to be the most unexpected hits of '91, and, thanks to my legendary generosity, you're the first to hear of them!

Now, till next ish, wherever you go, whatever you do, think Marvel! (Instead of cluttering your mind with non-essentials!) Excuse!

Stan

It was a rainy day in New York. The kind of day when you could get wet just by walking outside. The man on the corner was selling umbrellas for five dollars each. I could usually talk him down to three. When I got home, I would throw it on the pile with the 300 other umbrellas I've managed to leave at home every time it rains. It seems to rain a lot in New York. Perhaps it's God's way of trying to give the city an acid bath. Perhaps not. That's not for me to say. Me, I'm just another private eye. They call me Dodge Deadline. Comic Book Detective.

It was a slow day at the office. I was just about to seriously consider calling up that guy on TV who makes the pitch for Apex Technical School. Then he walked in—Tom DeFalco, head honcho over at Marvel Comics. He had a problem, and he needed my help. Last month's Bullpen Bulletins Page had disappeared before it had ever seen print. He wanted me to find it. I took the case. Tom took the six-pack.

I headed uptown to the offices of Marvel Comics. If I was going to learn anything about the missing Bullpen Page, this was the place to do it. My first stop was the office of PUNISHER editor Don Dasey.

Don told me he was exhausted—he was still resting up from the New York Runners Club's Midnight Run. That's a run that's held every year, beginning at exactly twelve midnight on New Year's Day. Don also entered the New York Marathon last year for the first time. It seemed like he'd been doing a lot of running lately. Just what exactly was he running from, anyway? I listed Don as a suspect, and moved on.

I stopped by Ralph Macchio's office, and found Ralph's assistant, Mike Heisler, still missing after a mysterious three-month absence. Heisler allegedly is taking some time off to do some freelance lettering, something about owing a debt to his uncle. Funny, I didn't know Heisler's uncle was named "Sam." Another potential suspect.

I stopped in to see Jim Salicrup, but he was so deliriously happy, he couldn't even

talk to me. Dodge Deadline. It seemed one of Jim's freelancers, Fred Hembeck, recently had a baby with his lovely wife Lynn. The child was born on August 25th, and named Julie Elizabeth Moss Hembeck. That's a lot of names for a little kid. In his present state, there was no talking to Salicrup, so I made a mental note to track him down later.

I noticed my mental pen was getting low on mental ink, so I made another mental note to stop by a mental store later and pick up some more.

I headed over to see Craig Anderson, Marvel's resident vid ot. Craig gave me the lowdown on the new Silver Surfer home video game from Nintendo and the Spider-Man home game from Sega-Genesis. Craig added that the Spider-Man hand-held game from Gameboy is also a big, big hit. Craig talked about a potential Spider-Man arcade game, but he seemed to be dodging the real issue. Did Craig know something about the missing Bullpen Page—something he wasn't telling me. Dodge Deadline?

Craig threw me a few names—Jim Starlin, George Perez. I caught them. He said they were working on a project which just might blow the lid off this whole case. But Starlin and Perez were nowhere to be found. Apparently they'd gone into hiding to work on this hush-hush project. All I found about this mystery project was that it involved a dangerous customer by the name of Thanos, as well as almost everybody in the Marvel Universe. Clearly I was on to something big... but that wasn't the case I was working on. I'd have to come back to that some other day. I still hadn't found that Bullpen Page.

Assistant Editor Chris Cooper walked by me, Dodge Deadline, in the hall. I overheard him tell fellow assistant, Len Kaminsky, he'd never been mentioned in the Bullpen Page before. Len said that made two of them. Hmm—that gives them both motives, but very flimsy ones.

I started snooping around Bob Budiansky's office. But Bob wasn't talking. Neither was his assistant, Tom Brevoort.

All I could get out of them was that they're doing a newsstand reprint of the four-issue DEATHLOK Limited Series, and working on the 1991 Marvel trading cards.

That was all well and good, but it didn't solve my case. I paid a visit to Epic Editor Marcus McLaurin, who was happy as a clam about the fourth anniversary of the Comic Illustrators Guild at the Pratt School of Art and Design. It seems Marcus formed the club while in his senior year at the school to pave the way for future generations of artists to get away with drawing comics in class.

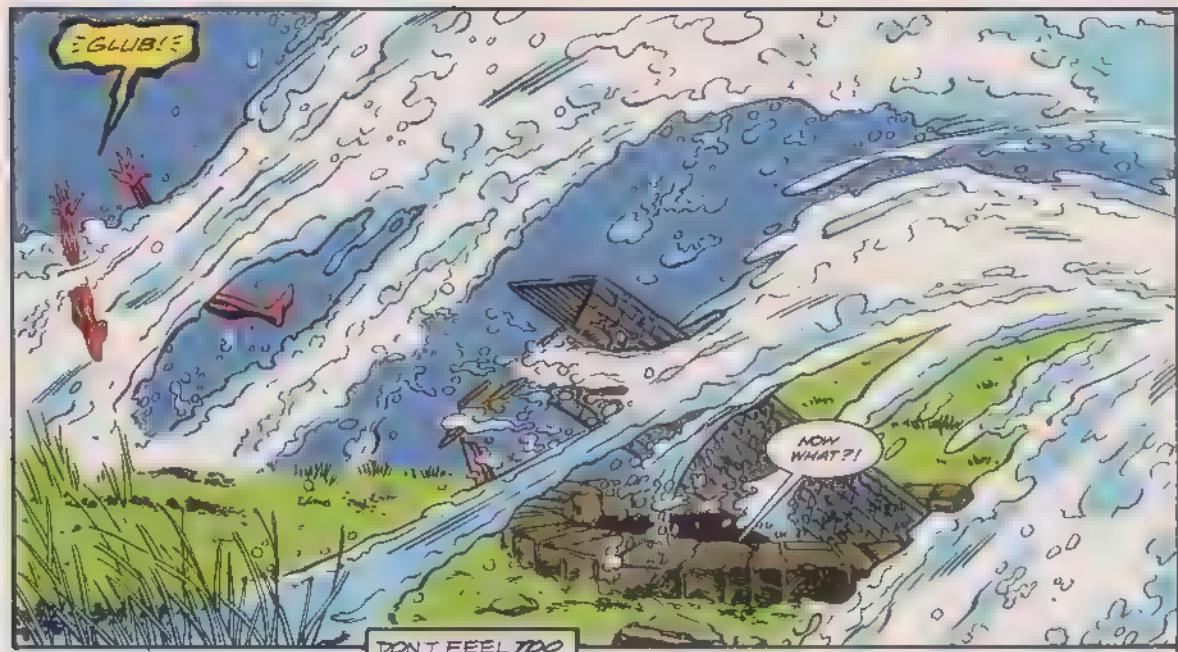
He's one sharp cucumber, that Marcus. But no pen Page-napper. Next I noticed his assistant, Marie Javins. Marie's wall is decorated with drawings of cows by some of the biggest names in comics. But Marie threatened to take down her Wall of Beautiful Bovines if she received no new submissions soon. Would Marie's wall come tumbling down? Unfortunately, I couldn't stick around to find out.

I could've pumped people at Marvel for answers all day, but I was cruising in the fast lane to nowhere. Everyone was a potential suspect. I decided I would switch tactics.

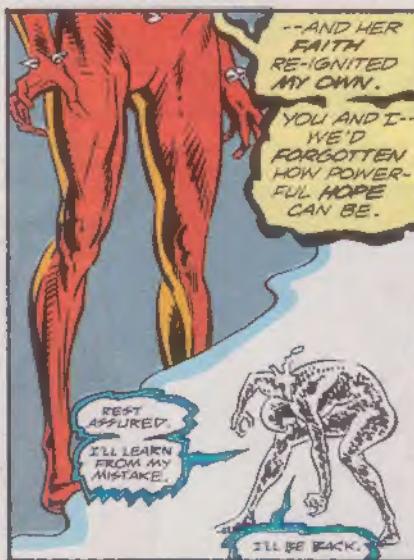
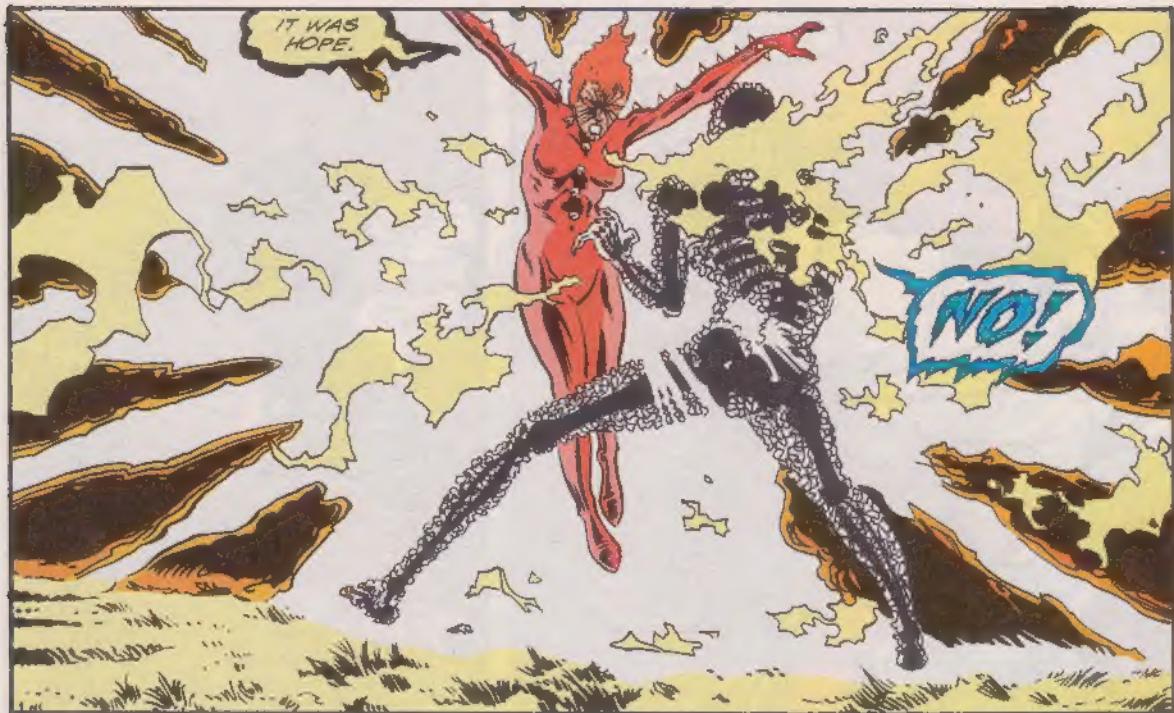
I charmed my way into Marvel's master computer file. If there was any trace left of the Bullpen Page, I knew I would find it here. I punched up the file, and there it was—the December Bullpen Page. It was just full of all kinds of incriminating evidence about the Marvel staff. If this thing ever saw print, it would destroy several careers, a couple marriages, and the noon trade at Slappy Sam's Eat 'n' Run. No wonder someone tried to suppress it. This thing was hotter than a jalapeno pepper in a sauna.

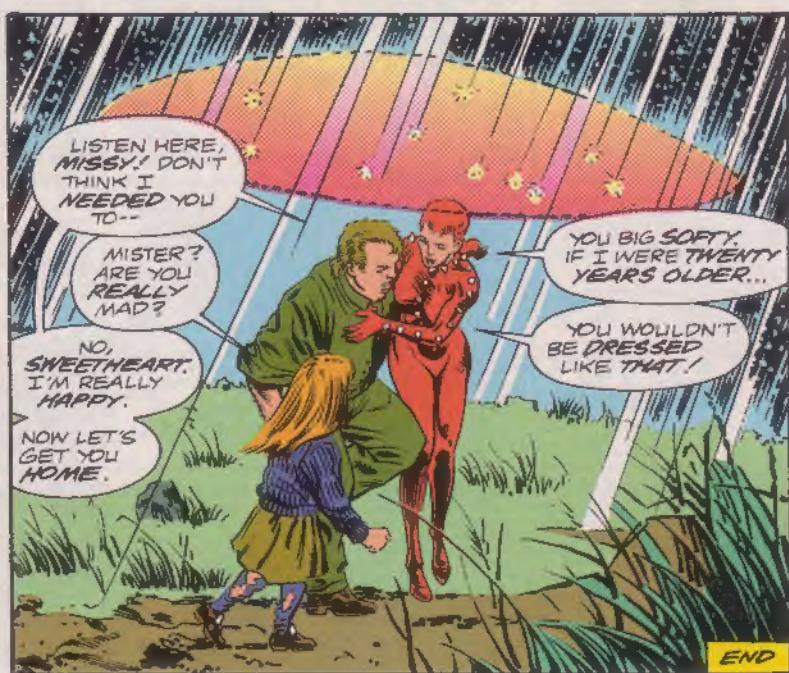
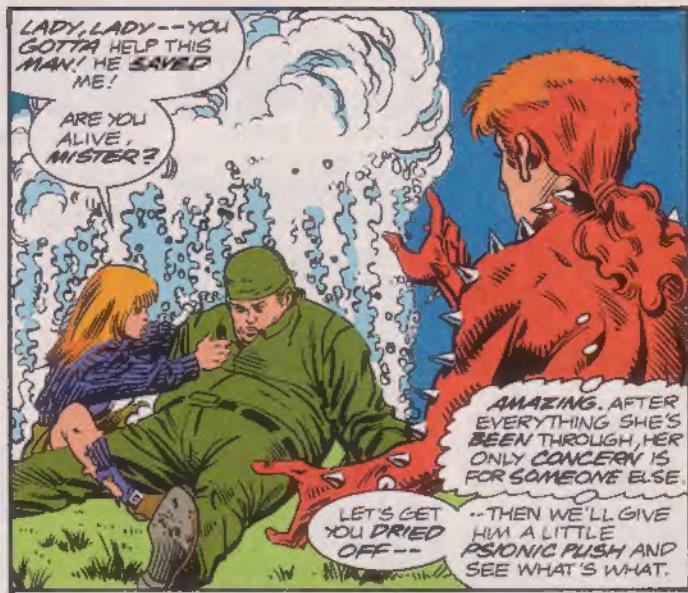
I decided to take the disc to DeFalco. If anyone knew I had this disc, I could start etching my own epitaph. Just then, I felt the cold steel of the barrel of a .45 press against the back of my neck.

IS THIS THE END OF DODGE DEADLINE? YOU WISH









MILLER • VARLEY



DEAD OR ALIVE, SHE'S BACK

ELEKTRA LIVES AGAIN

EPIC® HARDCOVER GRAPHIC NOVEL

SUGGESTED FOR MATURE READERS